

to restoring full diplomatic relations between these neighboring states.

Madam Speaker, I also want to congratulate Secretary of State Hillary Clinton for her leadership in helping to move the process forward. In this connection, I would like to submit an October 14, 2009 Washington Post editorial entitled, "Opening a Border." The article does an excellent job of detailing the deft diplomatic work of Secretary Clinton to assist Turkey and Armenia in taking this historic step.

As the article states, the rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia is critical to the United States since it promotes stability in the Caucasus region and could provide new avenues for gas and oil export to the West.

In closing, I commend Secretary Clinton and her colleagues at the State Department and offer my full support for their valiant efforts. The protocols have been sent to the parliaments of the respective countries. I hope they will be ratified quickly and open the door to a new era of diplomacy and friendship.

[From the Washington Post, Oct. 14, 2009]

OPENING A BORDER

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton executed some deft diplomacy last weekend as the leaders of Turkey and Armenia signed a potentially historic deal to establish normal diplomatic relations and reopen their borders. We say "potentially" because there are some big obstacles to implementing the accord, which we'll come back to. But Ms. Clinton helped to ensure that the signing ceremony in Zurich went forward after four hours of last-minute mediation. Not for the first time in her short tenure, she proved capable of overcoming an impasse and teasing out of a favorable outcome of the United States.

The rapprochement between these two nations matters to the United States for a number of reasons. It could help stabilize the volatile Caucasus region, open the way for new corridors for the export of gas and oil to the West, ease Russian's political domination of Armenia and remove a major irritant from U.S. relations with Turkey. The Obama administration worked diligently to promote the accord: Ms. Clinton made 29 phone calls to the leaders of the two nations. President Obama played a part by sidestepping a campaign promise to formally recognize the mass killing of Armenians by Turks during World War I as "genocide."

The genocide issue—and the refusal of some in the American Armenian community to compromise on it—still threaten to undo the deal. The opening of the border, closed since 1993, would be a huge benefit to impoverished and landlocked Armenia. But there is resistance to a provision of the accords that would set up a joint commission to study the study of the massacres. Opponents say this could give Turkey, which denies that a genocide took place, a means to filibuster the issue—and to stop the annual attempt by some in the U.S. Congress to pass a resolution declaring that genocide occurred. In fact, the issue is one best left to the two countries; that several U.S. Armenian groups have endorsed the accord is a victory for common sense.

A more formidable obstacle to the deal may be Armenia's unresolved dispute with another neighbor, Azerbaijan, over the ethnically Armenian enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, which is occupied by Armenian along with neighboring Azeri territory. Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan took the courageous step of declining to make the settlement of this "frozen conflict" a precondition to his accord with Armenia—thereby inviting the wrath of Azer-

baijan, which is an ally and energy supplier to Turkey. But Mr. Erdogan has said—most recently last Sunday—that his government will not go forward with the deal unless Armenia executes at last a partial withdrawal from Azerbaijan. That would be a tough step for Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan and require considerable international support: more delicate work for Ms. Clinton.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF ROBERT BROWN

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 26, 2009

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I would like to ask my colleagues here in the United States House of Representatives to join me in honoring the memory of Robert Brown, the first African American mayor of Orange, New Jersey, which is in my congressional district.

Mr. Brown is remembered by family, friends, and colleagues as a big thinker, a role model and an excellent presenter. He was born in 1947 in Wetumpka, Alabama, but was raised in Albany, New York, where he was described as a stellar student and athlete. He earned a football scholarship to Central Connecticut State College. After college he moved to East Orange and received a law degree in 1973 from Rutgers University in Newark.

Mr. Brown moved to Washington, D.C., where he worked as counsel on the Judiciary Committee for the House of Representatives during the Watergate hearings. He moved back to East Orange in 1976, and served as a municipal prosecutor and as the Essex County public defender before opening a private practice. He was widely recognized for his outstanding oration ability, his skill as a lawyer, and his strong commitment to community service.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to his son, Remington, and brother, Raymond.

As friends and family gather to remember Robert Brown, we are reminded of the tremendous difference that one person can make in the lives of others. I know my colleagues here in the United States House of Representatives join me in honoring the memory of Mr. Brown and in paying tribute to this outstanding person who meant so much to all who knew him and to the entire city of Orange.

HONORING EBRAHIM ASHABI

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 26, 2009

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Detective Ebrahim Ashabi, an 11-year veteran of the Long Beach, California, Police Department. I applaud his contributions to our community and wish him much future success.

Detective Ashabi's unique background has provided him with the tools to excel in his chosen profession. Born in Iran as a Shiite Muslim, Detective Ashabi lived through the Iranian Islamic Revolution of the late 1970s as well as the Iran-Iraq war. In 1982, Detective Ashabi fled from Iran into the Kurdish area of North-

ern Iraq and then into Turkey. After a few months in Europe, he emigrated to the United States, where he lived in New York and Washington, DC.

In 1990, Detective Ashabi moved to the Los Angeles area and in 1997 joined the Long Beach Police Department. Detective Ashabi now serves in the Long Beach Police Department's Office of Counter Terrorism, protecting the citizens of Long Beach and the United States from domestic and foreign homeland security threats. He is responsible for analyzing, collecting, and investigating criminal intelligence as it relates to terrorism, organized crime, and extremist activities. Detective Ashabi shared his expertise earlier this year at a first response training conference and exposition for law enforcement, military, security, corrections, and federal agencies. He presided as a keynote speaker and presented "A Brief History of Radical Islam," to his colleagues. Detective Ashabi also provides invaluable assistance in investigations with other local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, including the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force.

For the past five years, Detective Ashabi has trained law enforcement officers and his expertise is a tremendous asset to our community. Detective Ashabi holds a bachelor's degree in Public Administration from the University of La Verne and is currently working on his master's degree at California State University, Long Beach.

In closing, Madam Speaker, please join me in honoring the achievements of Detective Ebrahim Ashabi and wishing him continued success.

IN RECOGNITION OF MARY SHIRAH UPON HER RETIREMENT

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 26, 2009

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Mary Shirah, a Northwest Florida community leader who is retiring after fifteen years of public service as the Director of the Pregnancy Resource Center in Milton, Florida. Mary spent her career serving others, and I am proud to honor her dedication and service.

Born in 1927, Mary Shirah was a Navy wife. She married her husband, Henry, in 1946, and was married for 62 years until her husband passed away last year. Her family eventually settled in the Pensacola, Florida area, and found a home in the Pea Ridge community. In 1968, Mary went to work for Tupperware where a co-worker suggested that she volunteer at the Alpha Center in Pensacola, a resource center for pregnant women.

After working with the Alpha Center and encouraging her Women's Ministry Group at her church to participate, Mary decided to investigate the need for a similar center in Santa Rosa County. She went on to join the committee to find a director for the center and after much searching, the committee chose Mary to serve as the Executive Director. The Pregnancy Resource Center of Milton opened on March 20, 1995. Until her retirement, Mary has served as the center's sole executive director. Under her leadership, the PRC serves an average of 300 families each year.